

and is mapped to appropriate Michigan academic content and student achievement standards.

Accessed through PS one console or PC s, the PLATO Achieve Now reading/language arts curriculum supports the five essential elements of reading instruction: phonemic awareness; decoding of unfamiliar words; fluency; sufficient background information and vocabulary to foster reading comprehension; active strategies to construct meaning from print; and motivation to read. The mathematics curriculum supplements a district's existing mathematics curriculum and includes six strands: geometry and measurement; number sense and numeration; computation and operations; data, statistics and probability; patterns, functions and relations and problem solving.

B. Describe Logistics of providing service to eligible students.

PLATO Learning program is offered at the school site. PLATO Learning does not provide transportation. The program model involves a 1: 10 tutor to student ratio and is best administered two days weekly for one or two hours each day. The tutors use a variety of instructional strategies and program materials that involve one to one and small group (1:3) instruction.

2. Indicate who will provide the instruction, their qualifications, and the ongoing support they will receive.

PLATO will hire certified teachers and substitutes from the local area district lists who must have experience teaching reading and mathematics. They will be trained by the lead PLATO SES Consultant in tutorial, small group instructional strategies and use of the Achieve Now software. The training and observation program for tutors has been detailed in the PLATO SES Implementation Manual to ensure the program put in place at each school consistently meets the required high standards. Consultants hired by PLATO to support the SES program must possess at least a Bachelor's Degree and have at least five years of teaching experience.

The PLATO SES Implementation Manual details a two day classroom training program for tutors. There will be a focus on how to use the PLATO Achieve Now curriculum, Pre/post-tests and Progress Checks to create individual student learning paths that will be the basis of the unique Student Tutorial Plan. Tutors will also be trained in use of the technology to facilitate individual and small learning groups, create and maintain individual student progress folders, and classroom organization strategies conducive to a tutoring environment. At the end of the training session they will be expected to (1) understand their role and responsibilities, (2) be familiar with and know how to use all the materials, (3) use technology effectively to accelerate learning, (4) use small group organizational strategies, and, (5) be familiar with the paperwork requirements of the program.

3. Provide evidence of the program's effectiveness in increasing student achievement.

More than 1,000 action research studies nationwide address PLATO Achieve Now's success in supporting increased student achievement. Most of these school-based studies represent achievement gains for underachieving, low-income students. In addition to action research, PLATO (formerly Lightspan) also has been validated through multiple independent, longitudinal research studies. These studies demonstrate the program can be replicated in urban, suburban and rural settings.

Specifically, in a Title I school in Delaware, in a controlled environment where the program was used with 2nd and 3rd grade students, using norm-referenced tests there was a significant impact in the areas of vocabulary, reading comprehension, and mathematics achievement. The treatment group outperformed the non-treatment group at a statistically significant level in five out of the six subtests for a two-year period.

In a continuous improvement model, evaluation information from the prior year's evaluation is analyzed and the implementations are adapted to increase program effectiveness during the next school year. These procedures, common to a PLATO Achieve Now implementation, were in place at the evaluation sites referenced in this section. Summaries of evidence supporting student achievement include the following:

Abstract #1

Study Title: The Effects of the Delaware Challenge Grant Program on the Standardized Reading and Mathematics Test Scores of Second and Third Grade Students

Author: Joe H. Birch, Ph.D.

Date completed: January 2002

Months/years covered by evaluation: Two-year period from 1998 through 2000

Number of schools involved: Two schools – one school participating in the Delaware Challenge Grant Project and one school that did not participate

Demographics of sample population: The enrollment of the experimental school, W.B. Simpson Elementary School, was 518, with 53% male and 47% female, a 25.2% minority population, and 38% free and reduced lunch. Enrollment at the control school, Nellie Hughes Elementary, was 525 students, with 51% male and 49% female, a minority population of 25.4%, and 44% free and reduced lunch.

Methodology: Pre/post, experimental/control, multi-site

Measure/indicators used to assess effectiveness: Stanford Achievement Test, 9th Edition, Form S, Primary 2 (first year of study), and Primary 3 (second year of study), Harcourt Brace, 1996

Findings: For students using the PLATO Learning program, there was a significant impact on vocabulary, reading comprehension, and mathematics achievement. The

treatment group outperformed the non-treatment group at a statistically significant level in five out of six subtests over the two-year period.

Abstract #2

Study Title: The Effect of an Intervention Lab Program on the Reading Achievement of Level 1 and 2 Students in Grade 3-5

Author: Cheryl B. Mitchell

Date completed: November 2001

Month/years covered by the evaluation: 2000-2001

Number of schools involved: One

Demographic sample population: 86% white, 10% African American, and 3% biracial, 52% female

Methodology: Students in grades four and five were selected based on scores received on May 2000, North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) test. Students in grade three were selected based on the score received on the August 2000 pretest. STAR test results from 2000 and 2001 were compiled in two separate categories to provide an alternative measure of growth in reading achievement.

Measures/indicators used to assess effectiveness: North Carolina End-of-Grade (EOG) assessment and STAR Reading

Findings: Students using the two interventions -- Lightspan Achieve Now and Soar to Success -- demonstrated significant growth on all testing instruments.

Abstract#3

Sumter County District 2 Public Schools. High Hills, Pocalla Springs, Rafting Creek Elementary Schools; Hillcrest, Mayewood Middle Schools Sumter, South Carolina.

Student Achievement gains in Reading and Mathematics using Lightspan Achieve Now in Sumter County District 2 Schools during summer session. During the 1999 Summer school program, students in grades one through eight demonstrated gains in reading and mathematics as measured by the Lightspan progress tests. Lightspan Achieve Now students outperformed control students in both mathematics and reading subtests. Overall, 72% of second-grade students showed gains in reading, and 90% of fifth-grade students showed improvement in reading. In mathematics, 90% of second-grades students displayed gains.

Students selected for summer school were pretested on the Lightspan progress tests in both reading and mathematics in June 1999. The middle school students completing grades seven and eight as well as those just completed sixth-grade were tested using level six materials. This project ended on July 15, 1999.

4. Describe evaluation, monitoring for effectiveness and communication process.

The PLATO SES Consultant working directly with tutors, school staff, and other personnel, will identify student's needs based on available achievement data,